



## Eating Mindfully This Holiday Season

Did you survive the tricks and treats of Halloween? Are there snack-size temptations still lingering behind cabinet doors? As these food-centered holidays continue, now might be a good time to make sure you have some healthy eating strategies up your sleeve.

This November “Nutrition Connection” shares with you mindful eating tips that come from a book called “**Mindless Eating**,” by food psychologist Brian Wansink. You will find his easy-to-read research opens your eyes to the many ways our environment causes us to eat more than we think. Even I, as a dietitian, was shocked that I can be tricked into eating more simply due to the size of my plate or the number of friends at my dinner table.

Here are a few of his tips to create more awareness and mindfulness in your eating:

### **Think 20% less.**

Dish out 20% less than you think you might want before you start a meal. Research tells us that our stomach won’t miss 20%, but when we cut out more, it will notice! On the other hand, dish out 20% more vegetables. If you cut your pasta by 20%, but increase your veggies by 20%, visually, your plate will look full, but will hold fewer calories.

### **See it before you eat it, and while you eat it.**

One of the reasons it is so easy to overeat at a party is because social eating induces “eating amnesia.” We might have an idea of how many times we went back to the food, but have no idea all of the nibbles and bites (calories) we consumed. Instead of telling yourself you can go back several times, fill up ONE plate with everything you plan on eating. Although it might look like a plate filled for 2,3 or 4 people, I can guarantee that that ONE plate will contain less calories than if you went back for seconds, thirds, or fourths.

### **Beware of the double dangers of leftovers.**

The more side dishes and little bowls of leftovers you bring out of the refrigerator, the more you will eat.

**Sit next to your slow eating friends.**

When we eat with others, we tend to mimic the speed that they eat. Fast eating friend? Not only will you eat faster, but you will eat more. Research also states the larger the group we eat with, the more we will eat. When we eat at a table for 4 versus a table of 1, we will eat 75% more. This does not mean we should give thanks by eating solo, but a reminder to be mindful while eating with others.

This Thanksgiving, not only are we grateful for our blessings, but we can also be thankful for the bounty of food we are able to enjoy. Enjoy each bite, savor it, and remember the celebrations are about friends and family, the food is just an added bonus!

**Cranberry Vinaigrette:**

This festive salad dressing transforms canned cranberry into a sweet & tangy topping for any green salad.

**Ingredients:**

1/2 cup canned whole-berry cranberry sauce  
1/4 cup fresh orange juice (about 1 orange)  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar  
1 teaspoon sugar  
1 teaspoon minced peeled fresh ginger  
1/4 teaspoon salt

**Directions:**

To prepare the vinaigrette, place the first 7 ingredients in a medium bowl; stir well with a whisk.

**If you follow these guidelines your everyday foods will be much improved! For more information regarding eating healthy and other nutrition topics, please contact:**

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